

REMARKS

With this Response, Applicants respectfully request that claim 2 be canceled without prejudice. Claims 1 and 3-4 are amended herein. Therefore, claims 1, 3-11, 19, 21-24, and 29-35 are pending.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants kindly acknowledge that claims 19-24 and 29-35 have been allowed.

Applicants further acknowledge that claims 2-4, 7 and 9 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Claim 1, from which these claims depend, is amended herein to incorporate the limitations of claim 2. Claim 2 is thus necessarily canceled. Thus, Applicants submit that claims 3-4, 7, and 9 should be found allowable for the reasons claim 2 was found allowable.

CLAIM REJECTIONS - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Rejections Under Lin

Claims 1, 6, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 4,672,421 of Lin (hereinafter "Lin"). Applicants have amended independent claim 1 herein to include subject matter found to be allowable over the cited references. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are not rendered obvious by the cited reference.

Rejections Under Akashi

Claims 1, 5, and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 6,934,448 of Akashi et al (hereinafter "Akashi"). Applicants have amended independent claim 1 herein to include subject matter found to be allowable over the cited references. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims are not rendered obvious by the cited reference.

CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the rejections of the claims have been overcome herein, placing all pending claims in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of the claims be withdrawn, and the claims be allowed. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone if such contact would further the examination of the above-referenced application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge or credit any deficiencies or over-payments to Deposit Account No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,

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